

Leviticus 27 - Thursday, April 22nd, 2010

- Tonight we come to the last chapter in the book of Leviticus which is about the Israelites making vows of dedication to the Lord.
- Next week Lord willing, we will begin a most fascinating study of the book of Numbers as we continue our study through the entire Bible.
- It's important to understand that the here-to-for the Israelites are still at the foot of Mt. Sinai where they've been since the exodus.
- What makes this interesting is that Moses didn't only bring down the two tablets he brought down all of these laws and statutes as well.

1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When a man consecrates by a vow certain persons to the LORD, according to your valuation,

- These vows were to be voluntary not mandatory, and both young and old alike would consecrate and dedicate themselves to the Lord.
- To make this vow of dedication was a demonstration and declaration that their life now belonged to the Lord, in his service.
- Each individual had a specific value which was based on their productivity and profitability as we'll see here in the next two verses.

3 If your valuation is of a male from twenty years old up to sixty years old, then your valuation shall be fifty shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary. 4 If it is a female, then your valuation shall be thirty shekels;

- Please don't think that the women are of less value than men, again, at this time in Israel's history, it had to do with their productivity.

5 and if from five years old up to twenty years old, then your valuation for a male shall be twenty shekels, and for a female ten shekels; 6 and if from a month old up to five years old, then your valuation for a male shall be five shekels of silver, and for a female your valuation shall be three shekels of silver; 7 and if from sixty years old and above, if it is a male, then your valuation shall be fifteen shekels, and for a female ten shekels.

- Here the values are set based on the age of the individual by virtue of how much the younger could work more, but the older less.

8 'But if he is too poor to pay your valuation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall set a value for him; according to the ability of him who vowed, the priest shall value him.

- This was a provision that made it possible for everyone and anyone to dedicate their lives to the Lord regardless of their ability to pay.

9 If it is an animal that men may bring as an offering to the LORD, all that anyone gives to the LORD shall be holy. 10 He shall not substitute it or exchange it, good for bad or bad for good; and if he at all exchanges animal for animal, then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be holy.

- This was a built in system of checks and balances in that it required the one dedicating an animal to be honest before the Lord.
- In other words, if you tried to trick God and slip in a lame animal instead of a healthy one, you would then have to give both to the Lord.

11 If it is an unclean animal which they do not offer as a sacrifice to the LORD, then he shall present the animal before the priest; 12 and the priest shall set a value for it, whether it is good or bad; as you, the priest, value it, so it shall be. 13 But if he wants at all to redeem it, then he must add one-fifth to your valuation.

- This meant that if anyone changed their minds and wanted to buy their animal back they had to pay a 20% penalty in order to do it.

14 And when a man dedicates his house to be holy to the LORD, then the priest shall set a value for it, whether it is good or bad; as the priest values it, so it shall stand. 15 If he who dedicated it wants to redeem his house, then he must add one-fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall be his.

- This is for those wishing to dedicate their houses to the Lord. Again, there's a buy back provision of 20% for those changing their minds.

16 If a man dedicates to the LORD part of a field of his possession, then your valuation shall be according to the seed for it. A homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver. 17 If he dedicates his field from the Year of Jubilee, according to your valuation it shall stand. 18 But if he dedicates his field after the Jubilee, then the priest shall reckon to him the money due according to the years that remain till the Year of Jubilee, and it shall be deducted from your valuation. 19 And if he who dedicates the field ever wishes to redeem it, then he must add one-fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall belong to him. 20 But if he does not want to redeem the field, or if he has sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed anymore; 21 but the field, when it is released in the Jubilee, shall be holy to the LORD, as a devoted field; it shall be the possession of the priest. 22 And if a man dedicates to the LORD a field which he has bought, which is not the field of his possession, 23 then the priest shall reckon to him the worth of your valuation, up to the Year of Jubilee, and he shall give your valuation on that day as a holy offering to the LORD. 24 In the Year of Jubilee the field shall return to him from whom it was bought, to the one who owned the land as a possession. 25 And all your valuations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs to the shekel.

- The Year of Jubilee which we studied about previously comes into play in how it would determine the value of the land to be dedicated.

26 But the firstborn of the animals, which should be the LORD's firstborn, no man shall dedicate; whether it is an ox or sheep, it is the LORD's. 27 And if it is an unclean animal, then he shall redeem it according to your valuation, and shall add one-fifth to it; or if it is not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to your valuation.

- This is interesting because it seems to indicate that they would try to dedicate the firstborn animal which already belonged to the Lord.
- Also, if the firstborn animal was unclean, it could not be sacrificed and was to be bought back for its full value plus an additional 20%.

28'Nevertheless no devoted offering that a man may devote to the LORD of all that he has, both man and beast, or the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed; every devoted offering is most holy to the LORD.29 No person under the ban, who may become doomed to destruction among men, shall be redeemed, but shall surely be put to death.

- What this says is that anything that is devoted to the Lord is prohibited from being sold or redeemed because it now belongs to Him.

"There is a great principle involved in these words. When once a person or possession had been solemnly dedicated to God, it was not permissible to withdraw from the obligations which had been assumed. Once given, the offering was regarded as God's property, and might not be resumed by the offerer, or placed to any inferior use. This regulation is specially applicable to our conception and practice of consecration. We are Christ's: by the gift of the Father, by the purchase of the blood of Christ, by the sealing of the Spirit; but a moment often comes in the life of the earnest believer when the Lord appears to claim a more earnest recognition of his rightful claim. Then thoughtfully and earnestly, spirit, soul, and body, are laid upon the altar, and we solemnly declare, "I am thine, O Lord!" When once this is done, we must reckon that God has accepted us, and that we cannot repeat the gift. We may perpetually refer to it, and acknowledge its abiding obligation, and apply its principle to all those new departments and functions which are perpetually increasing on us; but we can no more repeat it, than could the Israelite give God the firstling lamb, since it was already his (Leviticus 27:26). If we go back from the attitude we have once taken up, we must confess our relapse with tears and deep contrition, asking to be restored, waiting to be put back again into the old place by our merciful and compassionate High Priest. We cannot undo that past; but we may ask Him to restore us to the place we occupied before we went astray. Oh that we might never withdraw from the altar of entire consecration!

F.B. Meyer Devotionals on Leviticus (http://preceptaustin.org/leviticus_sermon_illustrations_2.htm)

30 And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's. It is holy to the LORD.31 If a man wants at all to redeem any of his tithes, he shall add one-fifth to it.

- This had to do with tithing from the produce of the land, if for whatever reason had to withhold it, they could add 20% at a later date.

32 And concerning the tithe of the herd or the flock, of whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the LORD.33 He shall not inquire whether it is good or bad, nor shall he exchange it; and if he exchanges it at all, then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed." 34 These are the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel on Mount Sinai.

- Here we catch a glimpse of how they would determine which animal to dedicate to the Lord. They would count ever tenth one.

- What makes this interesting is that they couldn't substitute a lame one if the tenth one ended up being a really healthy one.

- If you were to put a title on this chapter, it would have to be; "The Dedicating of our Lives to the Lord."

- I like the original 1828 Noah Webster's dictionary definition of the word "Dedicate."

DEDICATE - to vow, promise, devote, dedicate. The sense: is to send, to throw; hence, to set, to ap-point. To set apart and consecrate to a divine Being, or to a sacred purpose; to devote to a sacred use, by a solemn act, or by re-ligious ceremonies; as, to dedicate vessels, treasures, a temple, an altar, or a church, to God or to a religious use. Vessels of silver, of gold, and of brass, which king David did dedicate to the Lord. 2 Samuel. To appropriate solemnly to any person or purpose; to give wholly or chiefly to. The ministers of the gospel dedicate themselves, their time and their studies, to the service of Christ.

Noah Webster 1828

-If you were to divide this chapter into three sections, as it relates to the dedicating of our lives to the Lord you would have the following:

1. MY SELF (VERSES 1-8)

2. MY PROPERTY (VERSES 9-29)

3. MY MONEY (VERSES 30-34)

"Reader, thou hast now gone through the whole of this most interesting book; a book whose subject is too little regarded by Christians in general. Here thou mayest discover the rigid requisitions of Divine justice, the sinfulness of sin, the exceeding breadth of the commandment, and the end of all human perfection . . . By this law then is the knowledge, but not the cure of sin . . . We see then that Christ was the end of the law for righteousness (for justification) to everyone that believeth."

Adam Clarke